

# What to Expect from an OSH Inspection

## AN OSH INSPECTOR'S CREDENTIALS

When an OSH compliance officer arrives at the establishment or inspection site, he or she will display official credentials. The compliance officer will ask to meet with the employer or an appropriate employer representative. Employers should always ask to see the compliance officer's credentials.

## OPENING CONFERENCE

In the opening conference, the compliance officer will explain how and why the establishment or site was selected for an inspection. The officer will instruct whether the inspection will be comprehensive or partial. The compliance officer will also request the following kind of information from the management representative:

- Company mailing address
- Contact names and telephone numbers
- Number of employees
- Accident and injury records (OSHA Form 300)
- Written safety and health programs
- Whether there are any trade secrets at the establishment or site

Trade secrets are treated confidentially. The employer will be asked to select an employer representative to accompany the compliance officer during the inspection. This selection process may include a bargaining agency representative, safety committee selection or employee selection.

## THE INSPECTION PROCESS

The inspection tour will start at the beginning of the work process to the finished product. The compliance officer will observe safety and health conditions and practices, interview employees privately and make every effort to minimize any work interruptions. The compliance officer will take photographs and monitor employee exposures if necessary.

## CLOSING CONFERENCE

At the conclusion of inspection, the compliance officer will conduct a closing conference with the employer and the employee representatives. A free discussion will take place of the alleged violations that were observed during the inspection. Additional safety and health problems and needs may be discussed.

The compliance officer will not indicate any specific proposed monetary penalties. Many factors influence that amount and will only be calculated after all of the facts of the case are established. The employer rights and responsibilities will be explained. The discussion will include the time line of what happens after the site visit. Good communication and contact with the compliance officer is encouraged until the case is closed.